

REMARKS

Initially, Applicant notes that the Examiner's discussion of Japanese Patent Number JP 2002-127798 of the Information Disclosure Statement filed February 2, 2004 is not related to the present application, because Applicant did not file the Information Disclosure Statement referred to, nor has Applicant filed any IDS in the present application. Applicant notes that the Form PTO-1449 that was forwarded with the Office Action has an incorrect application number on it, and is clearly not intended to be part of the present application file. Thus, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner remove the improper Information Disclosure Statement and Form PTO-1449 from the file of the present application and inform the Applicant of the removal in the next official communication.

Claims 1-5, and 7-16 remain pending in the application. Claim 6 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof.

Reconsideration of the rejections and allowance of the pending application in view of the foregoing amendment and following remarks are respectfully requested.

In the Official Action claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the prior art disclosed in Applicant's specification, Figs. 1-3 (AAPA) in view of Varcus et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,361,067 (Varcus), claims 7-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over AAPA in view of Varcus and in further view of Taguchi et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,951,038 (Taguchi 038), and claims 11-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being

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unpatentable over AAPA in view of Varcus and in further view of Taguchi 038 and Taguchi et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,913,535 (Taguchi 535). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claim 1 has been amended to more clearly define a structural feature of an embodiment and to more clearly distinguish over the applied prior art references by further reciting a single gas-guiding hole provided on the retainer. No new matter is introduced by the present amendment. In this regard, the Examiner's attention is directed to, inter alia, Fig. 4 of Applicant's application.

It is a feature of an embodiment to provide a passenger air bag system of a vehicle, having a diffuser bag provided in a cushion so that gas is not eccentrically diffused into the cushion.

To achieve the above-noted feature, a passenger air bag system for a vehicle, as recited in amended claim 1, includes, inter alia, an air bag housing mountable to a front of an instrument panel, an inflator provided in the air bag housing to discharge gas when a collision of the vehicle occurs, a cushion accommodated in the air bag housing such that the cushion is expanded to a passenger seated in a passenger seat by the gas discharged from the inflator, a retainer attached to the air bag housing to support the cushion, a diffuser bag fixed to an inlet part of the cushion, the diffuser bag receiving gas through the inlet part of the cushion and comprising a plurality of gas-discharging holes formed at both sides thereof to discharge gas introduced thereinto into the cushion, and a single gas-guiding hole provided on the retainer.

Applicant respectfully submits that the cited references relied upon in the rejections under 35U.S.C. 103(a) do not disclose such a combination of features. In particular, none of the applied references discloses the above combination of features, including the single gas-guiding hole formed on the retainer.

The retainer 10 in AAPA includes a plurality of gas-guiding holes 10a therein, and none of Varcus, Taguchi 038 and Taguchi 535 includes the retainer. Instead, the gas outlet holes 3a in Taguchi 038 and Taguchi 535 are plural and formed on the inflator 3, and a gas inlet hole 21a is formed on the airbag body 21.

In contrast, in an embodiment of the present invention, as noted above, the retainer 60 includes a single gas-guiding hole 60a, and thus the retainer 60 does not cause flow resistance when the gas is discharged from the inflator 56 (see, inter alia, page 17, lines 22-23, and Fig. 4). Thus, the combination of elements including at least this feature is not disclosed in any of the applied references.

Thus, even assuming, arguendo, that the teachings of AAPA and the other applied references can be properly combined, none of the asserted combinations of AAPA and Varcus, AAPA, Varcus and Taguchi 038, and AAPA, Varcus, Taguchi 038 and Taguchi 535 would result in the invention as recited in claim 1.

Thus, the rejections of independent claim 1, and of claims 2-16 dependent thereon under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are improper for at least these reasons, and withdrawal of such rejection is respectfully requested.

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a) because the large

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number of gas- discharging holes in the upper and lower panels in claim 8 are not shown therein.

In response the drawings have been amended to add new Fig. 8 showing a plurality of gas-discharging holes in the upper and lower panels, as presently recited in the claims, and as clearly disclosed in the originally filed specification at page 14.

Accordingly, the drawings are believed to fully comply with 37 CFR 1.83(a).

The claims and the Abstract of the disclosure are objected to because of a typographical error of "form" therein.

In response, the Abstract of the disclosure and claim 1 have been amended to change "form" to --from-- therein. Accordingly It is respectfully requested, therefore, that the objections of the Abstract of the disclosure and the claims be withdrawn.

Independent claim 1 is now in condition for allowance in view of the amendments and the above-noted remarks. Dependent claims 2-5 and 7-16 are also submitted to be in condition for allowance in view of their dependence from the allowable base claim and also at least based upon their recitations of additional features of the present invention. It is respectfully requested, therefore, that the rejections under 35 U.S.C.103(a) be withdrawn and that an early indication of the allowance thereof be given.

Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based on

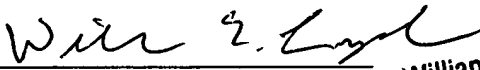
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prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to be attached thereto.

Based on the above, it is respectfully submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Should the Examiner have any questions or comments regarding this response, or the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,  
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Attachment: 1 Replacement Sheet of Drawings

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IN THE DRAWINGS

Please add the attached sheet of drawings, which includes a newly added Fig. 8. Fig. 8 is a longitudinal sectional view illustrating an operation of a diffuser bag of the passenger air bag system, which includes a plurality of gas-discharging holes in the upper and lower panels, which is described in the third full paragraph on page 14 of Applicant's specification as filed. Accordingly, no prohibited new matter has been included in the new figure.

Attachment : Replacement Sheet of Drawings